



**Aalto University**  
**School of Business**

# ***GENDER ROLES AND STEREOTYPES IN COSMETICS ADVERTISING***

***Is the future gender-neutral?***

Bachelor's Thesis  
Emilia Hämäläinen  
Aalto University School of Business  
Marketing  
Spring 2019

<b>Author</b> Emilia Hämäläinen		
<b>Title of thesis</b> Gender Roles and Stereotypes in Cosmetics Advertising: is the future gender-neutral?		
<b>Degree</b> Bachelor's Degree		
<b>Degree programme</b> Marketing		
<b>Thesis advisor(s)</b> Sami Kajalo		
<b>Year of approval</b> 2019	<b>Number of pages</b> 50	<b>Language</b> English

## Abstract

The cosmetics industry has traditionally been perceived as feminine, and brands operating in it are often gendered based on normative sexual dualism. However, gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles are fading at an increasing rate, making gender-neutrality not only a tool for empowerment, but also a larger societal shift especially in many Western cultures. Although the social role of both genders has changed drastically in the past years, many cosmetics advertisements still portray women and men in traditional settings to promote brands and products. This new shift towards less gendered societies calls for changes in the way products are advertised to modern consumers in the cosmetics industry. Based on the existing literature I have studied these gender effects in cosmetics advertising in three cosmetics categories: personal care, fragrances and makeup, and found three alternative ways used by brands to become more gender-neutral: becoming unisex, targeting the other gender and selling lifestyles instead of genders. Additionally, I have examined the symbolic meaning of brands as gender identity markers and identified that when advertising traditionally feminine brands and products to male consumers, advertisers often use exaggerated notions of masculinity to decrease the level of incongruence between the consumers' and product's gender. I call this the hypermasculinity phenomenon. Overall, the findings of this study contribute to relatively narrow body of research in the area of gender-neutral advertising, offer comprehensive insights to advertising managers and form a basis for future research.

---

**Keywords** *Advertising; Cosmetics; Cross-gender extensions; Gender; Gendered brands; Gender cues; Gender-neutral; Gender roles; Gender stereotypes; Hypermasculinity; Non-stereotypical Gender Role Portrayals; Unisex*

---

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction and motivation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Background &amp; defining gender-neutrality</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Brief history of genders, gender roles and gender stereotypes	5
2.1.1 Gender and sex	5
2.1.2 Gender identity	6
2.1.3 Stereotypes	6
2.2 Redefining gender	7
2.2.1 What is gender-neutrality?	7
2.2.2 The shift towards gender-neutrality	7
<b>3. Genders in cosmetics advertising</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 A brief introduction of advertising in general	9
3.2 Cosmetics brands and gender	9
3.2.1 Gender cues	11
3.3 Gender roles and stereotypes in cosmetics advertising	13
3.3.1 Personal care	16
3.3.2 Fragrances	20
3.3.3 Makeup	23
3.4 The hypermasculinity phenomenon	25
3.5 Advertising's impact to societies: Mirror or mold?	27
3.6 The rise of gender-neutral advertising	28
3.7 Non-stereotypical gender role advertising	28
<b>4. Towards gender-neutral cosmetics advertising</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Three ways to become more gender-neutral	30
4.1.1 Becoming unisex	30
4.1.2 Targeting the other gender	32
4.1.3 Selling lifestyles, not gender	34
4.2 Advantages of gender-neutral advertising	36
4.2.1 For advertising managers	36
4.2.2 Advantages for societies	37
4.3 Problems related to gender-neutrality in the cosmetics industry	37
<b>5. Conclusions, discussion, limitations and future research</b>	<b>38</b>
5.1 Conclusions and discussion	38
5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research	42
<b>6. References</b>	<b>43</b>

## 1. Introduction and motivation

Gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles are fading at an increasing rate, making gender neutrality not only a tool for empowerment, but also a larger societal shift especially in many western cultures. Gender-neutrality is re-shaping societies and customs in various ways, affecting the current use of language, dress codes, parenting methods and consumer trends among others. An increasing number of modern consumers is viewing gender as a non-binary or fluid construct, in simple meaning that gender identities do not fall exclusively into man or woman categories, or that gender is not a fixed feature and can change over time. Although the social role of both genders has changed drastically in the past years, many advertisers especially in the cosmetics industry still portray women and men in traditional gender roles to promote their brand and products (Knoll et al., 2011; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004).

However, the new shift calls for changes in the way products are marketed and advertised to modern consumers, especially among younger generations. This is a large change for the cosmetics industry since genders have traditionally played a pivotal role in its marketing efforts including advertisements, starting from the planning of them to segmentation and targeting.

Therefore, the primary research questions are:

“What are common gender roles and stereotypes in cosmetics advertising?” and “Is the future of cosmetics advertising gender-neutral?”

This paper is divided into several parts:

In the first part I will describe the background of this bachelor’s thesis and define the main concepts related to gender that are utilized throughout this study. In addition, I will provide a redefinition of gender and its roles in the Western societies of the 21st century.

The second part, on the other hand, studies how genders affect cosmetics brands, advertising and consumption in general. In addition, I will introduce a phenomenon largely salient in the cosmetics advertising and branding, called *the hypermasculinity -phenomenon*. Additionally, I will examine the effects that the redefined gender has on cosmetics advertising.

In the third part I will further study how brands and advertisers are moving towards gender-neutrality or gender-equality, and what advantages and disadvantages gender-neutrality holds for brands, advertisers and societies.

The body of literature concerning gender neutrality in advertising or marketing as a whole is rather narrow. Thus, I have studied the subject by mixing components from gender studies together with research related to marketing and advertising in general.



## **2. Background & defining gender-neutrality**

### **2.1 Brief history of genders, gender roles and gender stereotypes**

#### **2.1.1 Gender and sex**

*“What are little boys made of  
Snips and snails and puppy dog tails  
And such are little boys made of.*

*What are little girls made of  
Sugar and spice and all things nice”*

*(- Unknown)*

Gender is traditionally considered to come in two opposite forms: male and female. Throughout history people have been influenced by social perceptions of what type of appearance and behavior is expected and appropriate of each gender (Fischer & Anderson, 2012; Deutsch, 2007). Hence, gender roles can be described as a society's shared beliefs of behaviors and occupations that a particular gender is more likely to engage in (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Fischer & Anderson, 2012).

Although often used interchangeably (Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Ye & Robertson, 2012) it is important to stress that unlike sex, gender is not biologically determined, but a socially accomplished and culturally constituted dynamic construct (Avery, 2012; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; see also West & Zimmermann, 1987). Being socially and culturally constructed means that the characteristics or traits that are considered masculine or feminine rely on people continuously creating and reinforcing them through their daily behavior and actions inside societies. As West and Zimmermann (1987) suggest: gender is not something that we are, but something that we do. Hence, masculinity and femininity are not biological traits but personality traits (Fugate & Philips, 2010) that are performed through social interaction (West & Zimmermann, 1987). Although personality traits are usually considered relatively stable, personality is acknowledged to develop over time. Thus, it seems possible for these traits, too, to transform during an individual's lifetime.

Sex is one of the most fundamental of demographic categorizations in many fields of research and marketing along with market segmentation and targeting (Wu et al., 2013; see also Tifferet & Herstein, 2012) and forms the basis for organizing and structuring of every human culture (Bem,

1981). It can be regarded as the ‘labelling’ of a person as either gender that triggers gendered social practices (Fischer, 2015) such as gendered word choices and supposed preferences related to for example colors or styles.

Traditionally, sexes, genders and gender roles have strictly been divided into two indigenous categories, feminine and masculine; women and men (Richards et al. 2015; West & Zimmermann, 1987). However, it is possible to have a gender that is incoherent with the physical sex. A person possessing a combination of both masculine and feminine traits is often called androgynous (Fugate & Phillips, 2010) – however, during recent years new generations have begun to recognize a wider spectrum of gender, considering it more as a fluid and non-binary construct rather than fixed and strictly binary (Cieslik, 2017).

### 2.1.2 Gender identity

Gender identity, sometimes also referred to as an individual’s psychological sex, is a two-dimensional model describing the degree to which an individual identifies with traditional or typical masculine and feminine personality traits (Palan et al., 2011; Neale et al., 2016). Hence, the fundamental core of gender identity constructs of the level to which individuals view themselves as women or men. It is both a psychological construct and a social one that reflects the cultural contexts and existing norms of societies (Kacen, 2000). Additionally, it affects greatly on an individual’s consumption practices and preferences and thus overall consumer behavior (Ye & Robertson, 2012), as product use seems to help building, reinforcing and expressing individuals’ gender identities.

### 2.1.3 Stereotypes

Stereotypes are considered as representations of specific groups of people that stress a trait or a set of traits that may or may not be accurate with the real representations of the group (Storms, 1979). Despite the somewhat negative reputation of stereotypes, they are often regarded as necessary due to the overwhelming quantity of stimuli one constantly receives (Ladegaard, 1998). Thus, stereotypes work as shortcuts that can lead to expectations that provide useful orientations in everyday life. However, they are at risk to oversimplify conceptions and lead to judgements or expectations that differ greatly from reality (Knoll et al., 2011) and hence create stigmas to specific groups of people.

Gender stereotypes are socially-constructed beliefs that certain attributes differentiate males and females from one another (e.g. Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981; Kite et al 2008). They are either descriptive (*‘women are gentle’*) or prescriptive (*‘women should be gentle’*) by nature and are usually based on several components including personality traits, physical characteristics, role behaviors and occupational statuses (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Grau & Zotos, 2016), each of which has a feminine and a masculine form. The binary gender domains are hence distinguished by

appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, occupations, roles and use of products as defined and maintained within societies (Peñaloza, 1994). Typical gender-linked stereotypes describe women in more decorative roles (Uray & Burnaz, 2003) and as care-givers, and men as more successful and independent (Coltrane, 2000) and in powerful positions as breadwinners. Males are also typically regarded as active and less emotional but more agentic than females (Fisher & Dubé, 2005; Eagly & Steffen, 1984) whereas females are typically portrayed as younger and in more dependent roles than males (Knoll et al., 2011).

However, research indicates that genders might actually not differ in terms of felt emotions (Fisher & Dubé, 2005), only in the way they are acted out. Thus, it may be possible that some individuals are hiding or suppressing their emotions to avoid being marked based on the existing stereotypes. Performing these stereotypical gender roles fosters expectations that men and women should hold certain personality traits that are gendered and correspond to the gender roles existent in societies (Fischer & Anderson, 2012). This thought is also supported by Oakley (1972), who suggests that the psychological differences between genders are based on social conditioning rather than biology. Gender stereotypes thus create a vicious circle in which the social roles of genders affect to and create stereotypes (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990), which then have an impact on these roles. Hence, genders may be more alike than one would originally assume, in case stereotypes did not exist.

## 2.2 Redefining gender

### 2.2.1 What is gender-neutrality?

Merriam-Webster dictionary describes gender-neutrality as “not referring to either sex but only to people in general”. However, since most traits are perceived as either masculine or feminine, complete neutrality on this basis seems almost impossible especially in advertising, as most products and brands are gendered particularly in the eyes of the consumers. In this thesis I will approach gender-neutrality like it is presented in the Collins English Dictionary as something that is *suited for, applicable to or common to both* male and female genders. Hence, gender-neutrality can either be achieved by not referring to either sex in any way, or by simultaneously referring to both sexes, without highlighting either one. Based on this, it is assumable that gender-neutrality can be achieved not only through complete neutrality, but also through mixing together elements of both genders. These approaches will be studied carefully later in this thesis.

### 2.2.2 The shift towards gender-neutrality

Given that rather than being strictly physical, gender is a socially constructed phenomenon, it is possible for both genders to identify with cross-sex traits (Neale et al., 2015). This means that males can identify with traditional female traits and females with traditional male traits.

Sexual orientation, on the other hand, can be viewed as a multi-dimensional ensemble, which includes attractions, sexual behavior and sexual orientation identity. It is important to outline that

sexual orientation and cross-gender behavior are two separate concepts and changes in one do not automatically indicate changes in the other.

Sexual fluidity describes a construct that is not fixed, which means that it is situation-dependent flexibility in sexual responsiveness (Katz-Wise & Hyde, 2014; Giddins, 2019). Thus, this type of fluidity comprises changes in sexual orientation in multiple directions. Based on this, it seems likely that gender fluidity follows the same pattern, meaning that an individual's gender can change over time as a reaction for different types of stimuli.

Gender non-binary, on the other hand, is an umbrella-term for gender identities that do not fall into the traditional binary male and female-categories (Collins, 2018; Giddins, 2019; Richards et al., 2016).

Many societal norms are in the midst of a cultural shift and challenged by new, emerging norms and discourses. Gender roles have gone through great transformation as the social roles of both women and men have significantly changed in many western societies over the past few years (Knoll et al., 2011; Neale et al., 2015), leading into the blurring of both, traditional gender roles (Fugate & Phillips, 2010) and prohibitions along with social stigma associated with cross-gender or cross-sexed behaviors (Neale et al., 2015).

As noted previously, new generations are becoming more open-minded and accepting towards these societal changes (Cieslik, 2017; Dua, 2016). Consumers especially among the millennials (*born 1981-1996, according to Pew Research Center*) and young generation Z (*born 1997-2012*) are experimenting and expanding the traditional boundaries of sexual orientations along with gender identities and recognizing a broader spectrum of gender (Dua, 2016). This is supported by reports from recent years indicating that the number of individuals with gender dysphoria and gender incongruence has grown significantly (Richards et al., 2016). Traditional gender-based portrayals of femininity and masculinity are fading as androgyny and gender-fluidity (Friedman, 2017), along with gender non-binary are becoming more common among people. This changing gender identification shows that males are increasingly identifying as feminine and females as masculine (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Various celebrities have led and continue leading the way through these new changes, including Caitlyn Jenner (born William Bruce Jenner) – a transsexual former decathlete who came out as transgender and went through public transition to Caitlyn. Other non-binary celebrities include Miley Cyrus, Jaden Smith, Ruby Rose, Steven Tyler and Tilda Swinton, of which all consider themselves and their sexual identities falling into other categories than the traditional dual female and male ones (Dua, 2016).

This societal change extends beyond individuals, as organizations from UK's Royal Mail to Facebook are now including non-binary gender options for their customers (Richards et al., 2015). Also, multiple countries have accepted non-binary gender options in legal paper work, such as passports, birth certificates and driver's license (Rahim, 2017; Paton, 2015; Levin, 2017; Muller, 2013). These changes are forcing marketers and advertisers, too, to think outside of the old, outdated gender box.

### **3. Genders in cosmetics advertising**

#### **3.1 A brief introduction of advertising in general**

Advertising is among the most visible tools of business and marketing. It can be regarded as somewhat omnipresent in many cultures, indicating that it exists generally everywhere from the streets to internet and TV along with magazines. Drawing on cultural, social and visual conventions (Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998), it can be considered as a powerful tool for imbuing brands with symbolic meaning (Till & Priluck, 2001) and simply pairing brands with images to create a desired picture of a good or a service. Research indicates that visual imagery has potentially powerful effects on human psychology and physiology as it affects consumers' ideas, perceptions, beliefs, feelings, overall behavior and even health (Branthwaite, 2002). Overall, the main objective of advertising is to persuade consumers into buying products and services (Van Hellefont & Van de Bulk, 2012).

Advertising can be regarded as an important historical record, or even “the family album of society” (Belk & Pollay, 1985, pp. 888), presenting the way consumers would like to see themselves being. The role of genders in advertising is often significant. According to Peñaloza (1994, pp. 361), “marketers “consume” gender, drawing from social conventions via consumer research to better incorporate them into their market offerings. At the same time, consumers “produce” gender in the utilization of various gender inscribed market offerings”.

In the following chapter, I will study the role of genders in cosmetics brands and more generally in their advertising.

#### **3.2 Cosmetics brands and gender**

Gender forms one of the most common and universal segmentation criteria used by marketers due to it being easy to identify and access, but large enough profitability-wise (Putrevu, 2001 *in* Tifferet & Herstein, 2012). Hence, consumption has always been, and in most cases still is, gendered based on normative sexual binary (Kacen, 2000; see also Palan et al., 2011). The line between genders seems particularly clear in the traditionally feminine cosmetics industry, with new brands aimed to target exclusively male consumers arising continuously. Hence, most cosmetics brands and products remain gendered, which indicates that they contain either masculine or feminine identity meanings, or both, that are socially shared among consumers (e.g. Avery, 2012; Jung, 2006; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004; Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018; see also Neale et al., 2016). According to Grohmann (2009) and later Azar (2015), brands fall into the same 4 gender categories as individuals: feminine, masculine, androgynous and undifferentiated. When looking at cosmetics

brands, most fall under the feminine category, a growing number under the masculine category and a minority under the remaining two categories. This may be due to masculinity and femininity often being viewed as personality traits relevant to brands because of their symbolic value in reinforcing individuals' gender identities (Grohmann, 2009). This is also supported by Belk's (1988) extended self-theory, which in short suggests that '*we are what we have*' – thus our possessions mirror and reinforce our identities and "selves". These identity meanings are then maintained and reinforced through marketing communication as advertising messages and market segmentation (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). They seem to have a great effect on the self-perception of individuals, as for example a big part of children's gender-related behavior is learned through the media (see Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). Extending into adulthood too, advertising influences consumers' body image and satisfaction (Baird & Grieve, 2006; Grabe et al., 2008; Martin & Gentry, 1997; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004) along with gender roles, gender identity and expectations (Gentry & Harrison, 2010; Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998; Agliata & Tantleff-Dunn, 2004) in both sexes. Especially the idealized, or even slightly above-average-looking portrayals of beauty in cosmetics advertising has had a great impact on the self-perception of female viewers (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2011).

Hence, the main purpose of advertising is to persuade consumers into buying goods and services. However, since many products are not consumed purely for their inherent use-value, they also aid in the creation and expression of consumers' identities, including the one associated with gender (Van Hellemonst & Van den Bulck, 2012; see also Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998). Products can be either utilitarian, which means that they are purchased for their practical use, or hedonic, indicating that they are used for "luxury" purposes, or both. In the cosmetics industry, utilitarian brand benefits refer to the ability of the brand to accomplish the promised effects related to physical appearance in an effective manner (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2011), such as reducing wrinkles or spots, or obtaining a stronger, shinier and more hydrated hair. Hedonic benefits of cosmetics brands, on the other hand, include those related to the emotional experiences and feelings the brand is able to deliver to the consumer (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2011). These may include the consumers feeling younger, more self-confident or more attractive after using a certain cosmetics product. Most products seem to hold both hedonic and utilitarian benefits, which are often clearly stated in the marketing of these products from labels to slogans and advertisements.

Taken together, advertisements not only describe and list product features and characteristics, but also sell ideas, fantasies and identities. Consumers then create, enhance and accomplish gender identities through consumption, making possessions a symbolic gender identity marker (Avery, 2012). In case individuals consider their identity highly masculine or feminine, those individuals are likely to choose a product that strengthens this perception through gender cues, and contrariwise avoid products threatening it. Gender cues include package colors, product names and phonetic symbols (Wu et al., 2013) among others, and will be covered next in this paper.

### 3.2.1 Gender cues

When looking at the cosmetics industry, for example Chanel seems to possess a rather strong feminine image among fragrances, and Old Spice's image appears firmly masculine. Also, in the shower gel industry Axe is traditionally viewed as masculine, whereas Dove is considered more feminine. Masculine cues are typically used to highlight a brand or a product's competence and promote masculine products, whereas feminine ones are used to emphasize compassion or to promote feminine products (Hess & Melnyk, 2014).



Image 1: Product names are an example of gendered cues (Wu et al., 2013). Many masculine product names emphasize competence and strength (Hess & Melnyk, 2014). The color scheme is typically brighter (no pastels included), and often includes darker tones and steel grey. In addition, products targeted to males typically include more angular shapes (Lieven et al., 2015). The aim is to make the users 'feel powerful'.



Image 2: When compared to the packages of the deodorants targeted to males, the ones for females are named to emphasize beauty and carefreeness. Also, the look of the packages is typically "softer", more delicate and brighter and includes rounder shapes (Lieven et al., 2015) with the overall purpose of making users 'feel gorgeous'. According to research, female consumers place more emphasis on product fragrance and visual impact (Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2010). This may explain why cosmetics targeted to women typically include words such as "floral" or "fruity".

Gender cues seem to effect brands and their image in different ways. For example, Puntoni et al. (2011) suggest that the use of a pink ribbon, which is a highly feminine cue, as part of a breast cancer campaign diminished the effectiveness of the campaign. However, research shows that incorporating subtle feminine gender cues such as shapes or colors into the packaging of a product or a print advertisement of brands with high competence can enhance the purchase likelihood of these products (Hess & Melnyk, 2014). Hence, feminine cues generate positive attitudes towards a product or a brand, but only if the brand has already established high competence. A likely explanation for the failure of the breast cancer campaign is that it emphasized too many feminine cues and not enough competence, resulting into a lower level of effectiveness. These findings indicate that using both gender cues simultaneously may be the best way for brands to move towards gender-neutrality. However, given the already feminine reputation of the cosmetics industry, adding feminine cues to cosmetics targeted to male consumers would most likely reduce the purchase likelihood among these consumers.

Overall, high levels of either brand femininity or masculinity are associated with more favorable consumer responses (Lieven et al., 2015). According to Ye and Robertson (2012), individuals with strong feminine identities are likely to have a psychological involvement with personal care products, which can then lead to greater brand loyalty. Given that gender identity influences consumer brand perceptions through creating brand meaning for consumers, in order to maintain gender image integrity, consumers are likely to choose products and brands with congruent gender identities (Feiereisen et al., 2009; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Avery, 2012; Wu et al., 2013; Lieven et al., 2015; see also Ye & Robertson, 2012). Thus, an advantage of gendered brands is that they seem to attract male or female consumers through their gender-specific associations, which aid these consumers in creating, reinforcing and expressing their gender identities. Given that the cosmetics industry is traditionally viewed as feminine, as mentioned above, it seems likely for males to limit their product use to strictly male-targeted and extremely masculine brands to avoid weakening their masculine identities. However, from a managerial point-of-view, associating with a specific gender can be a hindrance for brands aiming to extend beyond their current, traditional market segment (Jung, 2006). I will study this in the form of cross-gender and unisex extensions in chapters 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.

Hence, despite drastic societal changes related to gender roles, biological sex along with gender still continue to strongly influence consumers when it comes to choosing and using brands (Avery, 2012; see also Lieven et al., 2015). However, research suggests that women may more easily accept masculine products than men feminine products (Tilburg et al., 2015) and that using feminine brands and products creates a greater stigma for men than using masculine brands and products does for women (Neale et al., 2015). Men are more likely to support traditional gender-role beliefs when compared to women (Um, 2014). As a result of this, although both sexes tend to avoid incongruence, males are more likely to purchase gender-congruent products to protect or to reinforce their masculinity (Avery, 2012; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Neale et al., 2015) than females. However, it does appear that consumers are seeking for brands congruent with their gender identity,



rather than their biological sex (Neale et al., 2015). Hence, a shift towards gender neutrality is likely to encourage people with cross-gender identities to purchase gender congruent products rather than those congruent with their sex.

### 3.3 Gender roles and stereotypes in cosmetics advertising

According to research, gender stereotyping in advertising still exists and is prevalent worldwide (Grau & Zotos, 2016), also in the cosmetics industry. The cosmetics industry has traditionally been strongly geared towards female consumers' needs and wants (Chen, 2017) and men have not been as well-represented in the industry (Wilbur, 2016). According to Euromonitor, global per capita spending on cosmetics products was \$6.50 for men in 2015 and \$58.50 for women. However, it seems that there is an increasing demand for cosmetics by male consumers, too. (see Souiden & Diagne, 2009). For example, the market value for men's grooming has increased by nearly 100 million British pounds in the United Kingdom during years 2015-2017. In addition, approximately a third of British males surveyed consider it equally important for men and women to take good care of themselves and their appearance (Statista). Studies conducted in other parts of Europe, the United States and Asia also show similar results in the growing interest in the male grooming market.

Despite the changing nature of cosmetics and their target audience, the industry remains strongly divided into female and male-categories. When referring to women, cosmetics products are typically called '*beauty products*' whereas '*grooming products*' is an often-used equivalent for men. Since most cosmetics brands are gendered, these genders are further reinforced and highlighted in advertising.

Hence, gendered brands and products have an effect on how genders are portrayed in advertising. Advertising frequently utilizes stereotypes to promote products to consumers (e.g. Eisend, 2009; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004; see also Zotos & Tschla, 2014), and gender role portrayals of idealized, stereotypical individuals can be used as a tool to communicate a brand image (Chu et al., 2016). Stereotyped imagery forms one of the most popular techniques of persuasion in advertising due to its familiarity and thus effectiveness. "As a simple presentation of complex information, they (gender stereotypes) tend to make sense through generalizations" (Kosunen et al., 2017, 22). This may either be helpful or harmful depending on several factors, including the prevailing gender attitudes of the audience (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). Taking the latest societal changes into account, it is likely for the younger generations to be less tolerant when it comes to stereotyping genders. For this reason, marketers should consider the changing roles of genders when advertising to and targeting consumers.

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes usually portray women as younger, more dependent and in domestic roles. Men, on the other hand, are typically portrayed as older, authoritarian and in independent roles outside of the home (Grau & Zotos, 2016). Also, males are often guided by self,

agentic goals, while women seem to pursue other, more communal concerns. Drawing on this conceptualization of gender, research suggests that men are driven by the achievement of gains due to their agentic nature, whereas women are driven by the prevention of losses (He, Inman & Mittal, 2008 *in* Feiereisen et al., 2009). These seem to extend to the cosmetics industry, too, as traditional gender roles and stereotypes in cosmetics advertising portray women in decorative roles, sensual, smiling and relaxing. Males, on the other hand are typically represented in powerful positions, serious, busy and professional, even to the excess. I call this excessive emphasis on masculine cues and masculinity in general *the hypermasculinity-phenomenon*, which will be covered later in this thesis, in chapter 3.3. In addition, cosmetics advertising typically exploits sexuality (Connelly, 2013), which means that it often places more focus on sexuality than the product itself, even when the sexual image has little or no relevance to it (Reichert & Lambiase, 2003 *in* Dahl & Sengupta, 2009). When studying the sexual exploitation of women in the advertising of health and wellness products, which also include cosmetics, Rudman and Hagiwara (1992) determined that women are often placed in submissive positions to men, in unnatural poses and with a strong emphasis on dismembered body parts. Perhaps due to this, women exhibit a negative reaction to explicit sexual content in advertising when compared to men, whose spontaneous evaluations are mainly positive (Sengupta & Dahl, 2008).



*Image 3: A combination of an unnatural pose, a dismembered body part and nudity used to highlight sexuality (Connelly, 2013; Rudman & Hagiwara, 1992) in a fragrance advertisement targeted to male consumers*

Over time, and as a result of the changing social norms of genders, it seems that women are increasingly being portrayed in more masculine and dominant settings (e.g. businesswoman, head of the family, decision maker, athletic etc.). The images of powerful and confident women appeal to modern female consumers by providing role models on which to reflect (Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2010). Male roles in commercials and advertisements, on the other hand, have changed relatively little over time when compared to the roles of females (Gentry & Harrison, 2010). This may be due to masculine roles being more favored and valued in societies and thus emphasizing them seems less

problematic when compared to feminine roles. Also, as men are likely to protect their masculine identities (Avery, 2012; see also Fugate & Phillips, 2010) and so-called male egos, it may be risky for brands targeted to males to emphasize traditional female traits, as it can result into the feminization of the brand.



*Images 4&5: Here, the dominant role is played by the woman when attracting female consumers (selling and targeting the Gucci Guilty for Her), and by the man when attracting male ones (selling and targeting the Gucci Guilty pour Homme). The FOR HER -advertisement can be interpreted as non-stereotypical, whereas the portrayals of both characters in the POUR HOMME -one are considered as stereotypical.*

Overall, advertising messages are believed to have restricted the consumption of both genders rather significantly by limiting and structuring possibilities of masculine and feminine consumption (Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). It is likely that this has widened the gap between genders by reinforcing stereotypes and gender roles related to both men and women. Especially in the cosmetics industry where most hair care and skin care brands feature female celebrities and models in their advertising, the portrayals do not provide anything for the typical male consumer to identify with and thus ends up alienating most male consumers.

The need to reduce negative emotions is one of the main psychological motivations urging women to purchase cosmetics brands (Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2010), and this has extended to male consumers, too (Pike, 2016). Hence, the cosmetics industry relies on offering solutions for physical flaws that create these negative emotions. Cosmetics advertising typically conveys messages meant to instill



negative feelings related to for example social failure and rejection in case a consumer does not use a certain product. These advertisements typically promote unreal and excessed expectations not only related to physical beauty traits, but also the performance of the cosmetics products advertised (Connelly, 2013), which then may have an impact on the previously mentioned self-perception of consumers.



*Image 6: An example of unreal or excessed expectation (Connelly, 2013) suggesting that using an Axe anti dandruff shampoo will suddenly make the user extremely attractive and popular among women*

### 3.3.1 Personal care

Many personal care products, for example those of oral care and personal hygiene, are regarded as essential in modern societies, and equally important for both female and male consumers. Regardless of this, many of these products are gendered. Research also indicates that personal care products and services targeted to women are more expensive than those targeted to men (Dearden, 2016; see also Peñaloza, 1994), and that this high price of femininity is “fueled by the cultural expectation that women appear attractive and women’s own desires to do” (Duesterhaus et al., 2011 pp.184). Hence, the choice to buy a particular, gendered product over another one is based on the construction of the gendered self; or more simply whether it is congruent with the gender identity of that consumer (Duesterhaus et al., 2011; see also Fugate & Phillips, 2010).

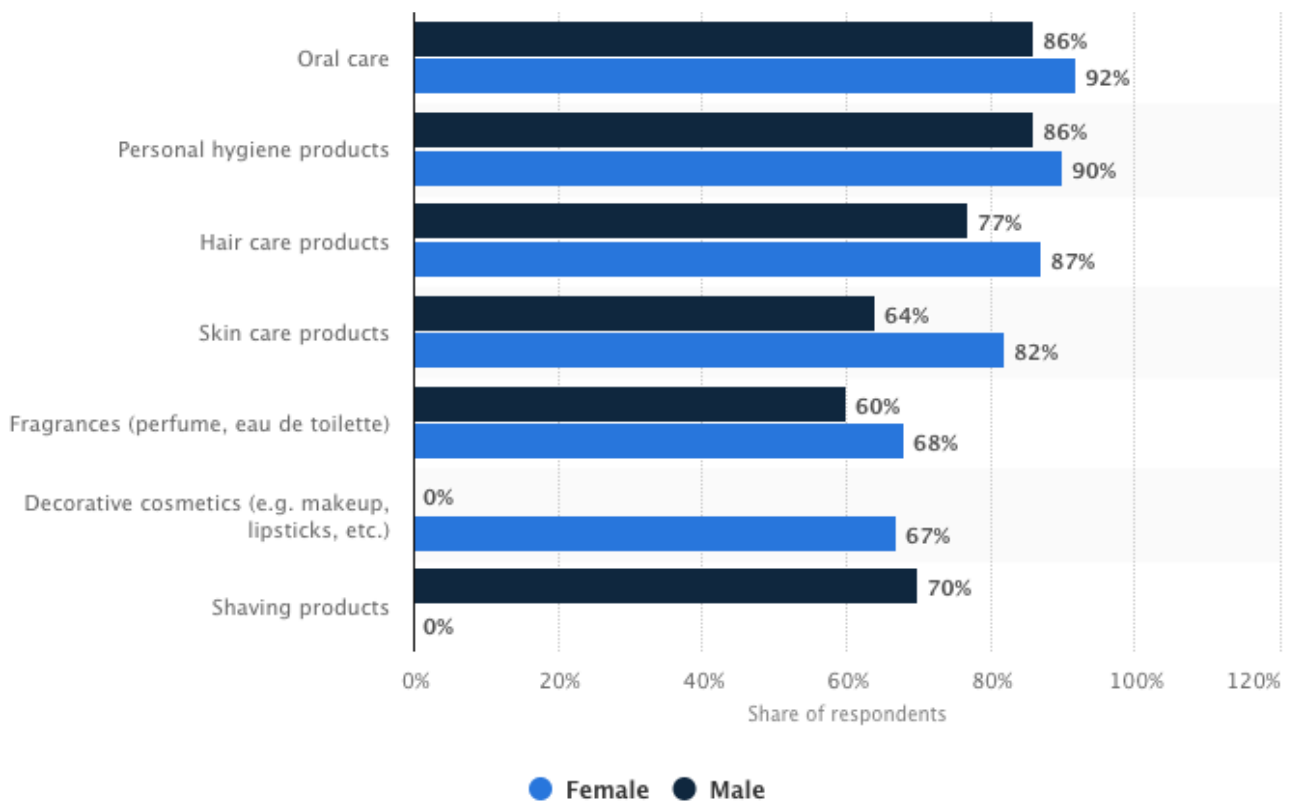


Image 7: Beauty and personal care products used by consumers daily or several times a week in the US in May 2017 (Statista). Most of these categories excluding makeup and shaving products are used by both genders, although slightly more by women. Hence, the differences between genders regarding cosmetics use is not as salient as earlier assumed.

As noted previously, many personal care products are regarded as equally essential for all individuals and hence can be described as “utilitarian”. They serve a clear purpose and often base on a biological need and thus may not require as much marketing efforts, since people are likely to buy them anyway. However, as there are various different companies providing certain cosmetics, for examples toothpastes and skin lotions, marketers are seeking for ways to stand out in the competition. As there is evidence indicating that women put more time and effort into shopping (Fischer & Arnold, 1990), generally enjoy shopping more than males do (Rook & Hoch, 1985 in Tifferet & Herstein, 2012), and receive and evaluate information and thus view advertisements differently when compared to men (Meyers-Levy, 1989), segmenting and targeting based on gender from this point-of-view seems rather efficient and reasonable. Hence, because gender differences in overall consumption are salient, segmenting based on gender and gender differences in products may enhance effectiveness and profitability.

What needs to be also taken into account are sex-related differences in skin thickness, collagen levels and sweat among others (King, 2014; Bremke, 2018). Hence, it seems logical to have specific cosmetics products targeted to a specific gender. However, the cosmetics industry does not limit to skin lotions, as it includes a variety of other products too, of which most are applicable to everyone regardless of gender.

As using feminine brands creates a greater stigma for men than vice versa (Neale et al., 2015), and men are more likely to support traditional gender-role beliefs than women (Um, 2014), a big challenge when targeting cosmetics to men is the stigma that still seems to exist around men buying items perceived as “beauty” products. To avoid this, many brands aim to create extremely masculine packages and advertisements and add labels stating “FOR MEN” to reinforce not only the consumers’, but also the brand’s masculinity, and ‘allow’ males to purchase a specific product (Simon, 2018). One way for marketers to target and engage male consumers is by associating cosmetics products with typical areas of male interest (Pike, 2016), including cars, comic books, sports and technology among others. Hence, different symbols of masculinity exist in a variety of products and advertisements to attract male consumers.

According to Ye and Robertson (2012), individuals possessing strong masculine identities are less likely to involve themselves with personal care products as they are typically seen as feminine. However, male consumers are more likely to build strong loyalty towards a particular brand, when compared to women, but only if the brand “provides them a mirror for reflecting a desirable masculine self-image” (pp.88).



Images: 8&9. The skincare and haircare retailer, Kiehl's, partnered with Marvel to create a limited-edition Captain America comic book, and launch its “Oil Eliminator”-moisturizer for men. Nivea’s anti-wrinkle cream is a classic example of cosmetics advertising targeted to women with a strong emphasis on happiness and fixing issues related to aging and its effects on self-esteem





Images: 10&11: Men are often portrayed more serious, whereas women typically smile in cosmetics advertisements. Also, the colors of the advertisements targeted to male consumers are often darker, and the shapes of the products more angular, than those of ads or products targeted to women.



Image 12: A strong emphasis is put on getting things done in an effective manner with an all in one product. This advertisement also clearly highlights the gender of the product

Research suggests that women are more likely to seek for aesthetic products, whereas men tend to shop for functionality (Dittmar et al., 1996; Rook & Hoch, 1985 in Souiden & Diagne, 2009). Hence, simplicity seems to be of great importance to male consumers. This is also supported by Mintel's 2015 survey indicating that 86% of male consumers in the United States, and approximately half of German and Spanish men prefer their daily grooming routine to be as simple as possible. Hence, many shower gels targeted to men are combinations of shampoo, conditioner and body wash.



Image 13: Although putting a strong emphasis on masculine features color and label-wise, this Dove Men Care advertisement from 2015 portrays a man as a caregiver which is considered as a non-stereotypical gender role as it is a trait normally linked to

### 3.3.2 Fragrances

Fragrances are often regarded as an important factor in human social communication (Lindqvist, 2012), and as many other cosmetics, most fragrances are categorized as either feminine or masculine. In fact, research suggests that gender is one of the main features used by consumers when judging and evaluating the perceived odor of fragrances (Jellink, 1993; Zarzo, 2008; Zarzo & Stanton, 2009 in Lindqvist, 2012). Perfumes in the feminine -category are typically described as *floral* or *fruity*, whereas masculine ones are often perceived as *spicy*, *woody* or *tangy* (Denham, 2018). These odors are linked to the existing gender roles and stereotypes of societies, which indicates that individuals wearing masculine perfumes are often regarded as more competent than those using feminine perfumes (Lindqvist, 2012; see also Sczesny & Stahlberg, 2002).





Images 14&15: Men are typically portrayed in powerful positions and often accompanied by a female in a more decorative or submissive role. The colors are often stronger, darker and colder and the expressions of the individuals more serious than in advertisements targeted to female consumers.



Images 16&17: The color schemes of women's perfume advertisements often include soft, pastel tones and warm colors. The women characters are often portrayed smiling and wearing less clothing. In addition, they are more likely to hold the item in their hands when compared to men

During recent years, the number of unisex fragrances, which include both masculine and feminine cues, has risen. According to Lindqvist (2012), most consumers prefer odors mixing elements of both, feminine and masculine categories. Despite gender being one of the first associations consumers make when sniffing a perfume (Zarzo, 2008; Zellner et al., 2008 in Lindqvist, 2012), perfumes seem to constitute a gender spectrum or a continuum of overlapping fragrances, rather than two distinct clusters of feminine and masculine ones (Lindqvist, 2012). The results of Lindqvist's (2012) study indicate that the commercial gender categorizations of fragrances may not correspond to the consumers' perceived gender associations of these products. Hence, when only based on the scent of the perfume, many perfumes fall under the unisex -category, indicating that they are perceived as neither exclusively masculine nor feminine.



*Image 18: Some of the individuals portrayed in this unisex advertisement represent somewhat androgynous genders, and the clothing is similar despite the biological sex. However, the color scheme is relatively cold and includes blue and grey tones, which are typically regarded as more masculine. But, the female in the front seems to add a hint of femininity and generate balance to the otherwise slightly masculine advertisement. The genderless or unisex nature of the product is further reinforced with the statement “one for all” under the picture, and also in the product’s name CK ONE, indicating that one product fits all genders.*





*Images 19&20: Unisex advertisements also portray men and women in a completely equal setting with e.g. similar clothing and pose as in the Tom Ford-advertisement. Or, without referring to genders in any way, as can be seen from the Hermès-advertisement on the right. There the product itself is the focal point of the advertisement, and the color scheme includes both, masculine and feminine tones. However, both of these advertisements including the clothing in the one of Tom Ford's, and the bright and mainly cold colors of Hermès' are more masculine than feminine*

### 3.3.3 Makeup

Despite drastic changes in the roles of both men and women, and the rapidly growing male “grooming” market, unlike the previous two categories (personal care and fragrances), makeup is still largely seen as purely female domain. However, although far from common, makeup on men seems to have become less of a taboo during recent years, as for example the number of male makeup artists has increased massively (see Ward, 2017).

Physical attractiveness forms one of the cornerstones of interpersonal attraction regarding both genders and is often focused mainly on facial attractiveness. In addition, facial attractiveness influences subjective evaluation of overall physical attractiveness, along with social and professional satisfaction and social desirability (Korichi et al., 2008). Hence, attractive individuals are more likely to be treated better socially and professionally when compared to less attractive ones (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2010). Facial cosmetics products, and in particular makeup, allow consumers to enhance and mold their features and thus their overall attractiveness. This desire to improve one's physical attractiveness seems to be a universal and inherent characteristic of most consumers (Adams, 1977; Etcoff 1999; Winston, 2003 in Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2010), regardless of gender. Hence, although cosmetics and makeup have traditionally been used mainly by women

to control their physical appearance and attractiveness (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2010), there has been an increase of interest among male consumers, too.

Social media stars including Patrick Starr and, James Charles and Jeffree Star have represented multiple makeup companies for example on social media, but makeup advertising campaigns portraying both, female and male consumers seem to be extremely rare.

However, new makeup brands including Fluide and Jecca are taking a stand on gender issues and launching products that are specifically targeted to transgender women, gender-nonconforming people and cisgender (non-transgender) men (Chesnut, 2018). In addition, classic brands such as Clinique and Tom Ford are increasingly creating cosmetics exclusively targeted to men. Even the French luxury fashion brand Chanel has joined the gender bending movement by creating its first makeup line for men, *Boy de Chanel*. This makeup line consists of subtle, natural elements including a clear lip balm, brown brow pencils and sheer, matte concealer.

However, the male makeup -industry seems to be strongly divided into Eastern and Western-categories. When comparing the ‘beauty/grooming ideals’ between the East (mainly Asia) and the West, an increasingly valued look in Asia is where men are exceptionally coiffed, groomed and ‘flawless’, whereas the look for men in the West is more rugged and ‘au naturel’ (Leigh, 2018). Makeup relatively normalized in some parts of Asia, and considered as skincare (Jones, 2018). Hence, companies need to consider these cultural differences in their marketing efforts, including advertising.



*Images 21&22: Chanel's Boy de Chanel-advertisement is subtler and more masculine as the makeup is not as visible and feminine as it is in the photo from Fluide's Instagram. Thus, it is assumable that the Chanel ad is more likely to attract males with more masculine identities, and Fluide the ones with feminine identities*





*Images 23&24: An example of a makeup brand that has not labelled itself as unisex (nor gender-exclusive) but uses both genders in its advertising. The male model on the left combines masculine (beard, facial expression, body hair, colors) and feminine features (jewelry, makeup, posture), but the end result is still rather 'rugged' and hence seems to fit well the Western market*

According to Fugate and Phillips (2010), consumers often look for gender congruence especially in product categories that are highly public or socially risky. Makeup, in particular if it is strong or includes bright colors, is clearly visible to others when compared to for example many personal care products including shower gels and toothpaste. Hence, it can be regarded as more public, and due to it still being strongly linked to femininity in the Western world, socially riskier than many other cosmetics product categories.

### 3.4 The hypermasculinity phenomenon

Multiple attributes and objects that were traditionally associated with masculinity have been overtaken by women during the last decades. These include for example knowledge, work, money, the ability to vote (Sullerot, 1992 in Kimmel & Tossier-Desbordes, 1999), along with certain sports and clothing styles. These major socioeconomic changes during the last century, and especially the past decades have threatened the masculine identities of many male consumers, which has led into men purchasing products with symbolic cues to strengthen and express their masculine identities (Holt & Thompson, 2004; see also Avery, 2012). Because the cosmetics industry is traditionally regarded as strongly feminine, it seems that in order to attract male consumers, many brands use exaggerated male stereotypes and role portrayals to highlight the masculinity of the brand or the product. I call this *the hypermasculinity phenomenon*. The term "hypermasculinity" first appeared in 1984, when Donald Mosher and Mark Sirkin developed it to measure macho personalities, which according to the authors consisted of three components: (a) calloused sex attitudes toward women

(b) violence as manly and (c) danger as exciting. These components are somewhat visible in hypermasculine cosmetics advertisements, as for example women are typically shown as submissive to males (Rudman & Hagiwara, 1992), and words such as “fight” and “eliminate” are often used. However, I do not approach hypermasculinity only through these three components. In this thesis, the hypermasculinity -phenomenon holds all advertisements and products that strongly emphasize multiple masculine cues with little or no reference to femininity. These cues include product names, labels, colors, shapes and portrayals in advertising.

The cosmetics industry in general is becoming more gender-equal, meaning that the number of male consumers and products targeted to this new consumer group is continuously increasing. Because male cosmetics form a relatively young and small industry, and cosmetics are still widely seen as female terrain, it seems that hypermasculinity into some extent is needed to target male consumers wanting to protect their masculine identities. However, this results into the alienation of women in regards of these products and thus does not promote gender-neutrality.

It is not only women that hypermasculine advertising alienates, as according to a 2016 Mintel survey, many male consumers reported having difficulties identifying with the male portrayals of advertisements (Pike, 2016). The borders of gender are blurring and taking new forms and hence, it seems that the narrow lens through which brands have spoken to men through advertisements does not apply to all male consumers. This may be due to the existing diversity of masculinities (Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018), which indicates that not all males fit the same mold.



*Image 25: Many hypermasculine advertisements set rules and norms and defines the essence of men, even though it might not be applicable to most male consumers*

However, some hypermasculine advertisements such as those of Old Spice include humorous and over-the-top male characters. Old Spice hence approaches hypermasculinity from a rather playful,

ironic manner. Research indicates that humor does improve consumers' attitudes along with recall and recognition towards the advertisement (Chung & Zhao, 2003), but especially if non-traditional stereotyping is utilized instead of traditional one (Eisend, 2011). Hence, combining elements of femininity with hypermasculine portrayals in advertisements may increase positive attitudes among consumers. However, this is likely to diminish the level of masculinity so much that it would no longer be regarded as hypermasculine. Additionally, it does not promote gender-neutrality, but further strengthens the line between genders.



*Image 26: Old Spice has used hypermasculinity in a humorous way, by combining different extremely macho elements including a muscular male character on a motorcycle in a hot tub to create satirical portrayals of masculinity.*

### 3.5 Advertising's impact to societies: Mirror or mold?

When studying the effects of gender roles and stereotypes on advertising, it is interesting to also examine the impacts of advertising to societies. A classic debate on these sequences represents two opposing arguments: 'mirror' (Holbrook, 1987) versus 'mold' (Pollay, 1986). According to the 'mirror' argument, advertising portrays and reflects current societal trends along with existing values and cultural expectations, and rather than creating and challenging social rules, it adapts to and mirrors the ones already existing, accepted and typically dominant inside a society (Eisend, 2009; Holbrook, 1987). This indicates that the impact of advertising to a society is relatively insignificant (Holbrook, 1987) due to the existence of multiple interrelated factors in contemporary socioeconomic and political environments influencing the values of a society (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014).

The 'mold' argument, on the contrary, argues that advertising shapes societies' existing beliefs and value systems (Pollay, 1986) and thus plays a crucial role in the creation of stereotypes (Schroeder



& Zwick, 2004). Hence, people's perception of social reality is both shaped but also maintained by the media through advertisements.

However, it seems that rather than being either, 'mirror' or 'mold', advertising has elements of both. This is supported by Schroeder and Zwick (2004) who suggest that advertisements are aesthetic objects and socio-political artifacts which both mirror and create social norms. In favor with this, Borgerson et al. also (2006) argue that marketing communications function as "representational systems and signifying practices that reflect, create and resolve cultural tensions of identity" (p. 955). Hence, as Zotos and Tsichla (2014) and Grau and Zotos (2016) suggest, it seems that the 'mirror' and the 'mold' argument is a continuum or a loop in which advertising both reflects and contributes to cultures and societies. Taken together, advertising's role to societies is relatively significant and it should thus be an effective channel through which to promote societal shifts such as those related to gender-equality and neutrality. As the cosmetics industry has a few leading brands such as Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Estée Lauder and L'Oréal that have had the greatest impact on the industry (Jones, 2010), it seems possible for these brands to be able to promote gender-equality in their marketing efforts.

### 3.6 The rise of gender-neutral advertising

Over the past few years, cross-gender extensions have been a growing trend among brands on different industries including cosmetics, partially as a result of the unisex trend in consumer goods (Jung, 2006), and possibly the rise of more open-minded millennials and generation Z (see Dua, 2016; Laughlin, 2016). Consumers' attitudes towards advertisements are generally influenced by their world views (Brunel & Nelson, 2000) along with gender role attitudes (see Ye & Robertson, 2012), and different types of people view advertisements in differing ways (Mehta, 2000). Gender roles attitudes refer to the beliefs of an individual about socially-desirable roles for men and women. Ranging from egalitarian to traditional, egalitarian individuals believe that the same roles are acceptable for all individuals regardless of their gender, whereas traditional individuals believe that different roles are appropriate for each gender (Spence, 1993 *in* Ye & Robertson, 2012). It is likely that modern consumers hold a more egalitarian view in regards of gender.

However, given that gender-neutrality has been of broad and current interest and a growing "trend" for the past few years, there are surprisingly few studies related to it. Hence, I will study the issue mainly through non-stereotypical gender role advertising and gender studies in general, simultaneously mixing them with studies related to advertising.

### 3.7 Non-stereotypical gender role advertising

Non-stereotypical gender role advertising (NSGR) by definition portrays gender roles that are not considered stereotypical. It can for example portray a male character applying makeup or performing other activities that are traditionally perceived as feminine. Or, a female character using



aftershave or preferring extremely simple beauty routines. Non-stereotypical gender role advertising may inspire greater attention, positive attitudes (Baxter et al., 2015) and interest among consumers when compared to more traditional gender role advertising (Chu et al., 2016). This is most likely due to differentiation and novelty of which both are known to generate positive attitudes among consumers. However, non-traditional portrayals may also stimulate psychological discomfort especially among audiences of older generations and those who favor or are more accustomed with traditional roles in advertisements or life in general. For example, research suggests that the use of homosexual imagery in advertisements generates greater attention and recall, but also more negative responses when compared to traditional, heterosexual imagery (Angelini & Bradley, 2010). According to Wilke (2007), heterosexuals are less likely to purchase a product from a company that uses homosexual imagery or people in its marketing efforts. Acknowledging that gender neutrality or non-stereotypical gender roles and homosexuality are completely different concepts, they are both typically incongruent to the majority, and thus consumers may respond to both in somewhat similar manner. Especially since non-stereotypical portrayals may include those traditionally linked to homosexuality, such as certain appearance (e.g. makeup) in male consumers. However, heterosexual consumers seem to be more tolerant towards lesbian imagery than gay male imagery (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005 in Um, 2015) In addition, males are less tolerant to gay-themed advertising than females (Um, 2015). These are likely due to men protecting their masculine identities through *consumption* that strengthens this perception of masculinity, as also suggested by Avery (2012).

However, advertisements portraying men in a more paternalistic manner for example in househusband-roles are liked to a greater extent than those that are categorized as envious (for example businessman-portrayals) (Zawisza et al., 2016). Given that the social roles of both genders and the attitudes towards these roles have drastically changed during the last century, it is likely for some of the non-traditional role portrayals to fit the real-life roles of many consumers and thus help consumers to identify with and generate positive attitudes towards these portrayals. As the use of cosmetics is becoming increasingly accepted among male consumers, portrayals of men in perhaps more insecure and realistic settings may increase the level of relatability and hence positive attitudes among men. However, portraying men in care-giver roles seems a lot less feminine than portraying men for example applying makeup, and hence this finding might not be fully applicable to the cosmetics industry, at least yet.

Hence, the level of gender-neutrality, gender-equality and non-binary in advertising seems to be strongly industry-dependent. When compared to for example the car or the toy industry, the cosmetics industry is yet to reach the same level of equality between genders and hence many non-stereotypical gender role portrayals may be regarded as being too radical and thus not relatable, especially in the eyes of male consumers.

## 4. Towards gender-neutral cosmetics advertising

### 4.1 Three ways to become more gender-neutral

In case gender-neutrality is something suitable for, applicable to or common to both male and female genders, it seems that there are three commonly used approaches for brands in general, including those in the cosmetics industry, to blur traditional gender lines and become more gender-neutral in regards of advertising. The first one is more widely used, labelling of brands and products as unisex. The second one is typically more provocative: targeting the other gender and challenging the existing gender stereotypes through non-stereotypical gender role portrayals and cross-gender extensions (see Chu et al., 2016). The third approach, on the other hand, focuses on selling and portraying lifestyles instead of just products or gender. These approaches are somewhat overlapping but will be studied separately to ease the analysis of all of them.

Also, it seems that the simplest way for a new brand is to start off as unisex or genderless (i.e. building a brand suitable for everyone regardless of their gender). However, becoming gender-neutral seems to require more from an already existing company since it most likely has already become gendered in the eyes of the consumers. In the following chapter I will further study these two approaches with demonstrative examples.

#### 4.1.1 Becoming unisex

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, unisex as a concept is '*The state or condition of not being distinguishable as male or female*', or '*suitable or designed for both males and females*'. Although most cosmetics products and brands are gendered, a vast majority of cosmetic items used daily by consumers are applicable to both sexes based on their somewhat similar biological needs related to personal hygiene (e.g. soap, toothpaste, shampoo, mouthwash, deodorant), and perhaps wants (the aim to enhance physical attractiveness). Still, most cosmetics products and brands remain divided strictly into female and male-categories.

However, during the recent years multiple cosmetics brands including French fragrance producer Guerlain, makeup giant Sephora, and online fashion and cosmetic retailer Asos among others have joined the gender bending and gender equality movement by creating unisex product line (Ahssen, 2018; Newman, 2010). Some of these examples have emphasized the unisex nature of their products by clearly labelling them as 'unisex' or 'for women and men'. However, there are lots of examples including soaps, shampoos and lotions that do not emphasize either gender, but yet do not label themselves as "unisex". From an advertising point-of-view, instead of having a clear

protagonist of either gender, unisex cosmetics advertisements typically include both genders, which are usually clearly definable as male and female, possibly to highlight that the product is applicable to both feminine and masculine identities, and not just androgynous ones.

Despite unisex being designed to be genderless and to fit both genders equally, it typically seems to be emphasizing more masculine traits than feminine ones in advertising. This may be due to individuals having a more positive attitude towards cross-gender behavior in females than that of males (see Neale et al., 2015). Related to this, it is suggested that masculine brands are more effective than other gendered brand profiles for masculine, feminine and androgynous consumers (Neale et al., 2015) because masculinity and possibly androgyny are more favored by consumers when compared to femininity. On the other hand, some unisex product advertisements do not portray people at all – instead, they only include a picture or pictures of the product or a feature related to it (*see the Hermès-example in image 20*).



*Image 27: With dark bottles and white labels including minimal wording, The Ordinary -products are unisex, and appeal to individuals who want to keep skincare and haircare as simple as possible – however, seeking simplicity is a trait more common among male consumers*



*Image 28: A “gender-neutral” approach for a razor blade -advertisement. Although it emphasizes that the exact same product fits both genders, it does categorize individuals to binary gender categories, which might alienate nonbinary consumers. A more gender-neutral approach simply state “Theirs” or “yours”. However, this might harm the core of the advertisement, since it would lose its meaning as a description of both genders being able to use the same product. Hence, this too promotes traditional gender-equality and is based on biological sex, rather than gender-neutrality, which is more based on psychological and social gender.*

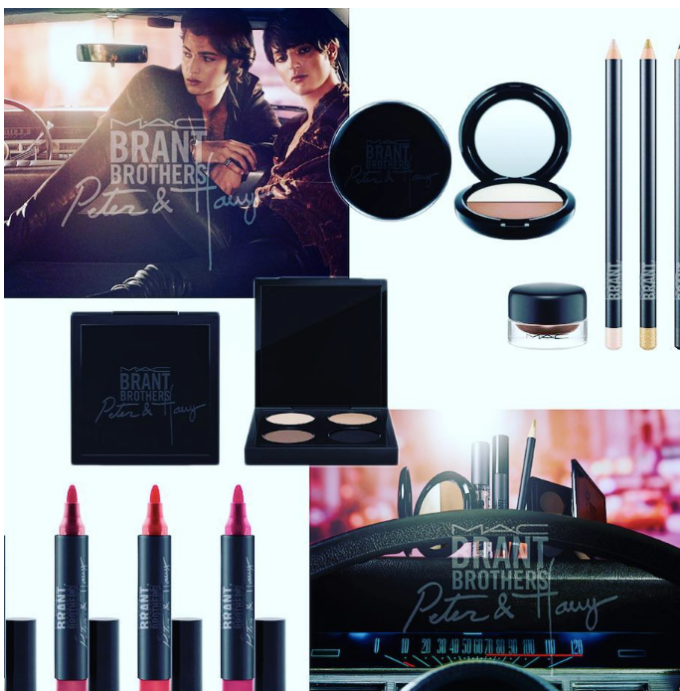
#### 4.1.2 Targeting the other gender

Given that gendered brands appeal to the gender of consumers, Sandhu (2017) suggests that these brands are suitable for either men or women, but not for both. However, the author overlooks the fact that gender and sex might not always be congruent – thus, feminine brands can be suitable for men and masculine brands for women whose gender is either fluid or otherwise non-binary. Or, for those who simply prefer products that can be regarded as cross-gender. Some businesses have already recognized the opportunity in these markets and aimed for less exclusively gendered and hence more gender-neutral marketing techniques by for example creating cross-gender extensions along with the previously mentioned unisex labels. The most critical aspect of cross-gender extending seems to be the brand’s perceived masculinity or femininity, and the brand image fit in the new market (Jung, 2006). If a brand is perceived highly feminine, the less appreciated the extension to a masculine market is by the consumers (Veg-Sala, 2017), especially in the highly feminine cosmetics industry. Hence, it is assumable that because of the feminine perception of the cosmetics industry in general, the advertising of most products targeted to men portray non-stereotypical gender roles.

Overall, it seems easier for male-oriented products to attract female consumers than vice versa. This finding lines with Alreck et al (1982) who suggest that men are more likely than women to reject gender incongruent brands. Cross-gender extending seems to work both ways, as it can:

1. Blur gender lines and lead into a less hierarchical gender order
2. Contribute to “gender contamination” and strengthen gender distinction by “reifying and reproducing hegemonic masculinity and solidifying its position at the top of the social hierarchy in the brand community” (Avery, 2012; see also Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018)

In accordance with Fugate and Phillips’ (2010) study, and as noted earlier in this study, especially men seem to continue valuing and protecting the masculine identity meanings of brands (Avery, 2012; Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018). However, a failed attempt of cross-gender extending does not always result into consumers avoiding the brand, especially among highly masculine brands. Although not applicable to the cosmetics industry due to its traditionally feminine nature, but worth noting is that when Porsche launched the new Cayenne SUV targeted to the female-market, rather than leaving the brand that had been “contaminated”, the brand community of male consumers started a series of defensive practices to actively defend their masculine identity marker in order to avoid the feminization of the brand (Avery, 2012). However, the study fails to fully acknowledge men in their diversity, including the ones who hold more feminine traits. This diversity of masculinities makes it challenging for all men to identify with a particular form of masculinity that a brand expresses (Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018). Hence, less gendered products and brands help non-binary genders but also different masculinities to identify with them.



*Image 29: Makeup giant MAC’s Brant Brothers -line features unisex products, and includes non-stereotypical gender portrayals as it portrays two male characters wearing makeup in most of its advertising efforts*

Cross-gender extending or gender-bending, which is taking things that have been targeted to one sex to target them to the other (Avery, 2012), is essential for already existing brands possessing strong feminine or masculine identities but aiming to be gender-neutral. As expressed earlier, although widening the target market of a brand can result into a larger customer base, it is also at risk to threaten the shared interpretation of a brand's meaning among the current brand community as consumers might find it harder to create and express their identity through it (Avery, 2012; see also Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018). In the cosmetics industry, making feminine brands more masculine is likely to be much easier than making masculine brands feminine due to women being more acceptive towards gender-bending. However, males are less likely to accept products that are, or have been, perceived as feminine.

Hence, when brands use the same name when extending to a new segment (e.g. from females to males), it is less likely for the cross-gender extensions to succeed (Veg-Sala, 2017). A possible explanation is that the gender of the brand in these situations is so established among consumers and highly linked to the brand name that the level of incongruity becomes too extreme (Chu et al., 2016), making it difficult for consumers from the new segment to adapt to it. This would explain why various cosmetics brands including Dove and L'Oréal, Garnier and Nivea have added "FOR MEN" -labels to the extensions targeted to the male market. However, when traditionally female-oriented brands extend to the male market with a new name, they do not become gender-neutral, as the extension becomes gendered. This means that the extension becomes exclusive to the new market, and the old one stays the same; exclusive to the old market.

The cosmetics industry is in a state of flux as products that were traditionally meant only for women are slowly becoming more accepted among male consumers. It seems that the industry as a whole is challenging the existing gender boundaries with new cosmetics products arising for men. Hence, the shift towards a less gendered cosmetics industry is at an early stage, and still rather feminine. Due to this, it seems essential to first encourage men to altogether use cosmetics products, by making the use of them masculine, as masculinity is the one feature males are highly likely to protect (Avery, 2012).

#### 4.1.3 Selling lifestyles, not gender

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, consumption is a form of self-expression (see Grohmann, 2009), and the products individuals use can be regarded as being a part of the extended self of these individuals (Belk, 1988). When choosing and using products, consumers often rely on brands that reflect their values and ethics. These may include values related to social and environmental responsibilities, health, animal rights, human rights, luxury or for example hobbies such as a certain sport or sports in general. The ultimate goal for advertisers and brands is to sell products or services while genuinely connecting with the customer. This requires the brands to get to know the consumers and their underlying values and motives (Olenski, 2016).

Hence, trends related to the values mentioned above has resulted into the emerge of organic, vegan, sustainable, clean cosmetics and the use of celebrity endorses or brand ambassadors, such as athletes. For example, whereas the traditional cosmetics industry emphasizes genders and gender roles in advertising, the organic beauty industry fosters an environment that is not dependent on sexuality but rather on product features, including organic ingredients and the general wellbeing of individuals who use them (Connelly, 2013).



Image 30: The color scheme and presence of elements from the nature emphasize the plant-based and vegan nature. It is also genderless as there is no apparent indication of either sex in the labels or the advertisement itself.

I believe that these findings from the organic beauty industry are applicable to other industries as well. For example, advertisements of certain products can emphasize product features that include ecology, health and ethics, as mentioned above, that reflect certain lifestyles. Research indicates that lifestyle segmentation forms one of the most effective market segmentation methods in contrast to more classic demographic segmentation (including gender) (Lekakos, 2009). Although imagery of women and men would be used in advertisements to promote these cosmetics, the ultimate focus would be shifted on for example the quality or effectiveness of a product feature. Hence, when the focus of typical beauty requirements related to gender is overshadowed by another product feature such as environment or health, the idealization of gender seems to diminish (see Connelly, 2013).

It seems that especially organic products have great potential in shifting the focus away from gender, as it is not an industry dominated by women. According to a study conducted in the United States in 2017 (Statista), men purchase more organic products than women in all categories of cosmetics excluding makeup and baby care. Hence it can be assumed that when the focus is set aside from the femininity of a product category and placed on a lifestyle, these products may more easily attract individuals regardless of their gender.

## 4.2 Advantages of gender-neutral advertising

### 4.2.1 For advertising managers

Gender still remains crucial in many brand narratives and hence advertising, and brands often face difficulties when aiming to attract other genders (Avery, 2012). Especially for consumers possessing nonbinary or fluid gender identities, it may be difficult to identify with a product targeted exclusively to one gender. Hence, it is assumable that products and advertisements possessing unisex features attract individuals of all genders without completely alienating some, when compared to exclusively feminine or masculine ones. In addition, it seems that gender-neutral phrases perform the best overall when studying keyword phrases used by advertisers (Jansen & Solomon, 2010).

Given that advertising exists almost everywhere, consumers are constantly exposed to an extensive amount of advertising messages. This so-called '*advertising clutter*' makes it difficult for brands to stand out in the excessive volume of advertisements. Marketers are continuously seeking for innovative ways to cut through the clutter by providing something new to the consumers (Rauwers & Van Noort, 2016).

Novelty is one of the cornerstones of successful advertising, and thus campaigns breaking the traditional boundaries may generate favorable responses from consumers (Chu et al., 2016). Need for uniqueness is an individual-level trait describing the measure of unique features a consumer seeks when purchasing a product. High-uniqueness consumers are likely to seek for products that are less mainstream and more niche than those with low-uniqueness, but also put more effort into owning innovative products (Lynn, 1992). Given that consumers with high NFU seek for uniqueness, they may hold a more favorable attitude towards non-stereotypical gender advertising when compared to more traditional one, because they are likely to set their focus on the novel cues of these advertisements. This indicates that at least the first brands to practice gender-neutrality, or more specifically portray non-stereotypical gender roles, will attract consumers with high NFU. However, if neutrality becomes the new norm, the level of uniqueness is likely to diminish over time and fail to fulfill the needs of consumers with high NFUs. In this case, however, there will still be left the individuals with lower NFU.

Another cornerstone of successful advertising is the level of identification with a brand or a product. If a product is highly gendered or targeted to a specific group of people, it is at risk to alienate other consumers not belonging to the targeted group. Hence, an advantage of gender-neutrality is that it may ease the identification process of individuals regardless of their gender. However, since most consumers value and seek for gender-congruency (Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Avery, 2012), having no or having mixed gender cues might also lead into the alienation of both genders. I will discuss this later in chapter 4.4: 'Problems related to gender-neutrality'.



#### 4.2.2 Advantages for societies

Attempts to uncover meaning in advertising are usually strongly focused on managerial considerations, and consumer responses in individual and cultural level are often overlooked (Pollay, 1986). However, due to the changing rules and boundaries of societies, it seems that the focus is set more on humanitarian issues including the rights of different minorities such as those related to gender and equality.

Although non-traditional gender roles in advertisements are likely to generate less positive attitudes among consumers of older and more traditional segments, it is suggested that these attitudes are still above the mid-point of the negative-positive scale, and thus more positive than negative (Baxter et al., 2015). On managerial level this means that the level of negative responses might be lower than one would originally think. On a society level, on the other hand, this means that people in general may be more tolerant towards non-traditional gender roles than perhaps assumed earlier. The acceptance of non-traditional roles presented in advertising depends on the consumers' openness towards these roles and the beliefs and values of a society (Chu et al., 2016; Knoll et al 2011). As the borders of what used to be the norm in genders are blurring, it is possible that the acceptance towards gender-neutral approaches will continue to strengthen in the following years. If in fact gender roles are reinforced or even sometimes created through marketing efforts, it is possible that less gender exclusive advertising begins to change and further challenge the traditional boundaries of gender, slowly turning gender-neutrality into the new norm. This is supported by Grohmann (2009), who suggests that as a result of a societal shift towards more androgynous gender roles may positively affect consumer responses in regards of androgynous brands over time. This would be a huge step towards a more neutral, equal and accepting society in regards of gender.

#### 4.3 Problems related to gender-neutrality in the cosmetics industry

Although there are various advantages of gender-neutral advertising on both, managerial and societal level, it is not unproblematic. Consumers raised in traditional environments are more likely to seek gender congruence when choosing products. Per contra, individuals with untraditional sex roles of parents usually do not subscribe to traditional sex roles as much and are less likely to purchase gender congruent products. Younger generations are becoming more acceptive towards different minorities including other cultures and untraditional genders and gender roles. Hence, it seems that age cohorts are an important consideration when choosing whether to stress product gender or not (Fugate & Phillips, 2010).

However, consumers seek for products that portray characters they either can or want to identify with. Due to this, advertising typically portrays attractive individuals, with which consumers most likely would want to identify themselves. By associating brands with imagery representing for

example successful and attractive role models, these brands can evoke feelings of sexual attractiveness and social or professional interaction success among consumers (Apaolaza-Ibáñez et al., 2010). For genderless brands, providing imagery that allows regular consumers to identify with may be difficult. Instead of having most consumers identifying to a genderless product, it may end up alienating them.

Incongruous messages require more time for consumers to process. Additionally, recognition memory sensitivity is better for atypical information in media messages. These indicate that advertisements representing counterstereotypes may be remembered better. However, participants of a study concerning homosexual imagery in advertisements reported having more negative emotional responses to advertisements with homosexual imagery, than to the heterosexual imagery advertisements (Angelini & Bradley, 2010). Hence, in contrast to the study conducted by Baxter et al. (2015) suggesting that non-stereotypical gender role portrayals generate positive attitudes, advertisements crossing gender lines may invoke discomfort among consumers which may lead to alienation of specific customer groups.

Additionally, since the gendering of most products is based on social rules and stereotypes, some cosmetics products are gendered due to biological needs of a certain sex (e.g. sex-related differences in skin). Advertising these in a neutral way may lead to confusion and inefficient targeting.

## **5. Conclusions, discussion, limitations and future research**

### **5.1 Conclusions and discussion**

The initial objective of this thesis was to examine and describe how genders in the form of typical gender roles and stereotypes affect cosmetics advertising. In addition, my aim was to study whether the future of cosmetics advertising is moving towards gender-neutrality.

This thesis briefly described the changing nature of gender from being strictly binary, to becoming a more complex and fluid structure, and also provided insight on common gender-related stereotypes and roles. I studied the effects of gender on three different cosmetics industry's product categories and their advertising; personal care, fragrances and makeup. The first two include products that are widely used by both genders, whereas the last one is still mainly used exclusively by female consumers. Next, I will discuss my findings in general, and in these categories.

Despite the drastic societal trends related to gender roles of the past decades, gender still remains crucial in many brand and advertising narratives especially in the cosmetics industry (see Avery 2012; Grau & Zotos, 2016). Due to cosmetics being regarded as feminine for such a long period of time, it seems that shifting towards gender-neutrality first requires accomplishing a certain level of gender-equality in regards of the industry and its offerings. Hence, it seems that the cosmetics industry is taking a step towards gender-neutrality by offering products that were traditionally viewed as feminine, to male consumers, and that the increase in men's consumption of cosmetics

itself is an evidence of gender-blurring (Kacen, 2000). However, as females are still the most salient consumers of cosmetics, many brands use exaggerated masculine imagery and slogans to attract male consumers. I call this over-gendering of brands and products with multiple masculine cues in product design and advertising *the hypermasculinization -phenomenon*. The cosmetics industry is still at the stage of introducing products to male consumers and welcoming the new segment. Thus, challenging and bending the existing stereotypes is likely to alienate these fragile consumers that have not reached strong brand loyalty towards cosmetics brands. This is especially due to males being more protective of their masculine identities when compared to females, and highly likely to only choose and use products that are congruent with their gender identities (Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Avery, 2012).

Although male consumers are increasingly identifying with cross-sex or cross-gender traits related to for example househusband and dad -roles (Neale et al., 2015), and that part of men's cosmetics use is accepted and regarded as completely normal, these cross-gender or cross-sex traits have not extended as much to the use of certain cosmetics including makeup, at least among males with masculine gender identities. Hence, it seems that the level of gender-neutrality is category-dependent: for example, makeup is still largely seen as purely female domain and due to its relatively public and socially risky nature, most male consumers find its use altogether too incongruent with their masculine gender identities (see Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Makeup for men is still far from common in most Western societies, and thus most cosmetics brands only portray women in their advertisements. Those that include male portrayals and target male consumers with masculine identities, on the other hand, perpetrate hypermasculinity by excluding most feminine features and strongly emphasizing masculinity to decrease the level of gender incongruity. There are, however, new brands such as Jecca and Fluide arising to target mainly transgender, genderfluid or other gender-nonconforming individuals with advertisements portraying women and men in equal settings (e.g. wearing similar makeup).

The gender lines on the other two cosmetics industry's categories do not seem as clear as the ones related to makeup. For example, most personal care products are regarded as equally important to both genders, and hence gender portrayals of both female and male consumers are used in the advertising of them. Despite the equally important nature of most of these products, a majority of these products remains gendered – some most likely because the industry has not reached a completely gender-equal state at least in regards of consumers with masculine identities, and some for reasons related to the ease and effectiveness of targeting and segmenting a specific gender.

Personal care	Fragrances	Makeup	Overall
Although often regarded as equally important for all genders, most products remain gendered, which can be seen as multiple gender cues in packaging (colors, names etc.) and advertising imagery. Advertisements for male consumers often emphasize simplicity, whereas the ones for women focus on other, more complex matters and aesthetic features	Gender is one of the main features used by consumers when judging and evaluating the perceived odor of fragrances. “Floral” and “fruity” for women, “woody” and “tangy” for men. Despite being gendered, many fragrances actually fall under the unisex-category, when only based on their scent. Advertising especially in this category typically strongly exploits sexuality	Still largely seen as purely female domain. When advertising makeup for men with masculine identities, hypermasculinity is often used to balance the incongruence between the gender of the industry and the gender of the consumer	Advertising imagery is used to further highlight the gender of a product/brand although the gendering might not be needed in the first place. Hypermasculinity is often used in the traditionally feminine cosmetics industry. Additionally, gendering is an easy way for marketers to segment and target consumers.

*A summary of differences between gender portrayals in three categories in the cosmetics industry*

Advertisers use diverse techniques that are often based on biological features and stereotypes when targeting different genders. However, as masculine and feminine (along with androgynous and undifferentiated to some extent) groups are not always isomorphic with biological sex, and that consumer responses generally differ on the basis of psychologically based self-schemas of gender identity (Hogg & Garrow, 2001), it is important to take the changing notions of gender into account. As a result of comparing advertisements between different cosmetics companies and brands this study has found that there are generally three ways used by brands to move towards gender-neutrality: becoming unisex, targeting the other gender and hence challenging the existing gender boundaries, and focusing on selling a lifestyle rather than just a product

It seems that the simplest way for new brands to become gender-inclusive is to start off as unisex or genderless either by clearly labelling the products as unisex, or not referring to gender in any way by shifting the focus to a product feature (e.g. its organic nature) instead of gender. However, becoming gender-neutral seems to require more from already existing companies and brands since most of them have become gendered in the eyes of the consumers and hence ended up excluding individuals with gender identities incongruent to that of these brands. These companies often end up challenging existing gender boundaries by targeting genders that are incongruent to the traditional target segment of the brand (e.g. Dove before it created Dove Men). However, rather than leading into gender-neutrality, most of these examples only enhance gender-equality by offering similar products to female and male consumers. Rather than being for everyone regardless of gender, there has been an increase in traditionally feminine brands offering masculine extensions, which are clearly labelled as being “for men”.

Going unisex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Either by clearly labelling as "unisex" or by not referring to either gender or by referring to both simultaneously</li> <li>• Typically emphasizes masculine features despite its genderless nature</li> <li>• Most likely the simplest way for new brands to begin when aiming to be gender-neutral</li> </ul>
Targeting the other gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging the existing gender stereotypes and roles by presenting non-stereotypical role portrayals in advertising</li> <li>• Cross-gender extensions and gender-bending</li> <li>• E.g. a man applying makeup, or a woman using aftershave</li> <li>• It seems that the traditionally feminine cosmetics industry itself is challenging gender stereotypes by targeting men altogether</li> </ul>
Selling lifestyles, not gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting the focus on a product feature (e.g. organic ingredients) or a lifestyle (vegan, eco-friendly, sporty etc.) the product represents instead of gender</li> <li>• Either by portraying no genders or by portraying both genders but the focus is shifted to product features</li> </ul>

*A summary of the findings regarding the three ways brands are using/ should use when aiming to become more gender-neutral*

As brands and products remain to form parts of consumers' extended selves (Belk, 1998) and have a strong impact on their gender identities (Grohmann, 2009), they seem to have an important symbolic value for many consumers. Hence, brands will continue making products and advertisements that have a positive effect on consumers' purchasing decisions. As long as product or brand genders increase the purchase likelihood of a target group, it is likely for these brands and products to remain gendered.

In regards of whether the future of cosmetics advertising is gender-neutral, it seems that there is still a long way to go, and more phases to reach. Given the massive size of the advertising industry and the fixed-like gender stereotypes of societies, re-gendering or de-gendering a product seems almost an impossible task through one marketer's efforts or campaign (Fugate & Philips, 2010). However, if the majority of one industry repositions a product's gender, achieving gender shifts seems possible (Chu et al., 2016). Despite this, it seems that the cosmetics industry has not reached the previously mentioned equality needed before reaching neutrality. With brands emphasizing other product features than gender continuously arising, it seems however, that the industry is becoming less polarized to two complete opposite, binary gender categories.

## 5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study was limited, to some extent, by the absence of up-to-date and empirical data. As the body of literature related to gender-neutrality, rather than gender-equality was relatively narrow, some conclusions were drawn based on studies conducted several years ago. However, because of the extremely topical nature of gender-neutrality and the continuously evolving notions of gender, this study could have been able to provide more in-depth insight of research from the past year or two.

An additional uncontrolled factor is the possibility that the conclusions made do not apply to all Western societies, as the previous studies covered only parts of the Western world. Additionally, as gender roles and norms vary between cultures, drawing completely universal conclusions is not possible. Hence, a comprehensive analysis on genders and especially gender-neutrality between various cultures should be carried out to establish cultural differences behind genders and gender portrayals in advertising. A further study could also assess the long-term effects of gender-neutral advertising on brand attitudes, loyalty and sales. As gender seems to have a massive effect on consumers' purchasing habits and overall behavior, it would be interesting to examine whether neutralizing, de-gendering or re-gendering products would be an oversimplification, and end up excluding most consumers instead of including all, regardless of gender.

Additionally, there are indications in research that genders differ in the way they consume messages. It would be interesting to study the effects of this in regards of gender-neutrality. For example, if a certain type of advertisement is more favored by female consumers, does it automatically mean it is not favored by male consumers – in other words, is it possible to generate advertisements that are neutral but still equally favored by both/all genders?

Interestingly, the gender cues of many professional cosmetics including those in the haircare industry seem to be less salient when compared to everyday products targeted to regular consumers. This may be due to the higher level of competition in the more traditional consumer segment, which indicates that genders might be used as competitive advantages in some product categories. This would provide a fruitful area of further work.

In spite of its limitations, this study adds to the understanding of the evolving notions of gender, gender-neutrality and its effects on advertising especially in the cosmetics industry.

## 6. References

- Agliata, D. & Tantleff-Dunn, S. (2004) The Impact of Media Exposure on Males' Body Image in *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 23(1): 7-22
- Ahssen (2018) Beauty is the Most Dynamic Category for Asos, online article: <https://us.fashionnetwork.com/news/-Beauty-is-the-most-dynamic-category-for-Asos-966242.html#.XJUBvBMza9Y>
- Alreck, P. L., Settle, R. B., & Belch, M. A. (1982). Who responds to "gendered" ads, and how? Masculine brands versus feminine brands in *Journal of Advertising Research*, 22(2), 25-32.
- Angelini, J. & Bradley, S.D. (2010), Homosexual Imagery in Print Advertisements: Attended, Remembered, But Disliked in *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57: 485-502
- Apaolaza-Ibáñez, V., Hartmann, P., Diehl, S. & Terlutter, R. (2011) Women satisfaction with cosmetics brands: The role of dissatisfaction and hedonic brand benefits in *African Journal of Business Management* 5(3): 792-802
- Ashmore R.D., & Del Boca, F.K. (1981) Conceptual Approaches to Stereotypes and Stereotyping in D.L. Hamilton (Ed.), *Cognitive Processes in Stereotyping and Intergroup Behavior* 1-35
- Avery, J. (2012), Defending the Markers of Masculinity: Consumer Resistance to Brand Gender-Bending in *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 19(4), 322-336
- Azar, S.L. (2015) Toward an understanding of brand sexual associations in *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(1): 43-56
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the Extended Self, *Journal of Consumer Research*. 15(2):139–168
- Belk, R.W. & Pollay, R.W. (1985) Images of Ourselves: The Good Life in Twentieth Century Advertising in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11(4): 887-897
- Borgerson, J.L. & Schroeder & J. (2006), The Gay Family in the Ad: Consumer Responses to Nontraditional Families in Marketing Communications in *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22: 955-978
- Borgerson, J.L., Schroeder, J.E., Blomberg, B. & Thorssén, E. (2006) The Gay Family in the Ad: Consumer Responses to Non-traditional Families in Marketing Communications in *Journal of Marketing Management* 22: 955-978
- Branthwaite, A. (2002) Investigating the power of imagery in marketing communication: evidence-based techniques in *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 5(3): 164-171
- Brantwaithe, A. (2002): Investigating the Power of Imagery in Marketing Communication: Evidence-based Techniques in *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal* 5(3): 164-171
- Bremke, J. (2018): Why skincare products are gendered – is it actually useful?: <https://medium.com/periodmovement/why-skincare-products-are-gendered-fdcc014c9374>

- Chen, J. (2017): Improving Gender Equality in the Beauty Industry, online article: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/290938>
- Chesnut, V. (2018) Not your mama's makeup: New cosmetics target consumers across gender spectrum: <https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/not-your-mama-s-makeup-new-cosmetics-target-consumers-across-n873386>
- Chu, K., Lee, D-H. & Kim, J.Y (2016) The effect of non-stereotypical gender role advertising on consumer evaluation in *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(1): 106-134
- Chung, H. & Zhao, X. (2003) Humour effect on Memory and Attitude: Moderating Role of Product Involvement in *International Journal of Advertising* 22(1): 117-144
- Cieslik, A. (2017): The future is fluid: Generation Z's approach to gender and sexuality is indeed revolutionary <https://www.dailydot.com/irl/generation-z-fluid/>
- Collins, K. (2018): How to Market to the Gender Fluid <https://medium.com/datadriveninvestor/how-to-improve-your-marketing-in-the-era-of-gender-fluidity-d3fefb25ce28>
- Coltrane, S. (2000) The Perpetuation of Subtle Prejudice: Race and Gender Imagery in 1990's Television Advertising in *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*
- Connelly, Brianna D. (2013). The Organic Beauty Industry: A Gendered Economic Review *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 138. Available online: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/138>
- Dahl, D., Sengupta, J. & Vohs, K.D. (2009) Sex in Advertising: Gender Differences and the Role of Relationship Commitment in *Journal of Consumer Research* 36: 215-231
- Dearden, L. (2016): Women paying more than men for everyday product thanks to 'unacceptable' gender price gap: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/women-paying-more-than-men-for-everyday-product-thanks-to-unacceptable-gender-price-gap-a6820816.html>
- Deaux, K. & Lewis, L.L (1984) Structure of gender stereotypes: Interrelationships among components and gender label in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 46(5): 991-1004
- Deaux, K., & LaFrance, M. (1998). Gender. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (pp. 788-827)
- Denham, J. (2018): 10 Best Unisex Perfumes, online article: <https://www.independent.co.uk/extras/indybest/fashion-beauty/best-unisex-perfumes-a6944261.html>
- Deutsch, F.M. (2007). Undoing Gender in *Gender and Society*, 21(1): 106-127
- Dua, T. (2016): From Coca-Cola to Barbie: The fierce rise of gender-neutral advertising <https://digiday.com/marketing/theyre-just-fierce-rise-gender-fluid-advertising/>
- Duesterhaus, M., Grauerholz, L., Weichsel, R. & Guittar, N.A. (2011) The Cost of Doing Femininity: Gendered Disparities in Pricing of Personal Care Products and Services in *Gender Issues* 28:175-191
- Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1984). Gender stereotypes stem from the distribution of women and men into social roles. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46(4): 735-754.
- Eisend, M. (2009) A Meta-analysis of Gender-roles in Advertising in *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 38(4): 418-440



- Eisend, M. (2011) How Humor in Advertising Works: A Meta-analytic Test of Alternative Models in *Marketing Letters*, 22(2): 115-132
- Feiereisen, S., Broderick, A.J., Douglas S.P. (2009) The Effect and Moderation of Gender Identity Congruity: Utilizing “Real Women” Advertising Images in *Psychology and Marketing* 26(9): 813-843
- Fischer, J. & Anderson, V.N. (2012) Gender Role Attitudes and Characteristics of Stay-at-Home and Employed Fathers in *Psychology of Men & Masculinity* 13(1): 16-31
- Fischer, J., & Anderson, V. N. (2012). Gender role attitudes and characteristics of stay-at-home and employed fathers. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 13(1), 16–31.
- Fisher, R.J. & Dubé, L. (2005) Gender Differences in Responses to Emotional Advertising: A Social Desirability Perspective in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4): 850-858
- Friedmann, E. & Brueller, D. (2018) Is stereotypical gender targeting effective for increasing service choice? In *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 44:35-44
- Fugate, D. L. & Phillips, J. (2010). Product Gender Perceptions and Antecedents of Product Gender Congruence, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 27(3):251– 261
- Gentry, J. & Harrison, R. (2010) Is advertising a barrier to male movement toward gender change in *Marketing Theory* 10(1): 74-96
- Giddins (2019): What does non-binary mean and how does identifying as genderqueer differ from agender or genderfluid?, online article: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/fabulous/6229054/non-binary-genderqueer-identity-agender-genderfluid-meaning/>
- Grabe, S., Ward, L.M. & Hyde, J.S. (2008) The Role of the Media in Body Image Concerns Among Women: A Meta-Analysis of Experimental and Correlational Studies in *Psychological Bulletin* 134(3): 460-476
- Grau, S.L. & Zotos, Y.C. (2016) Gender Stereotypes in Advertising: a Review of Current Research 35(5): 761-770
- Grohmann, B. (2009) Gender Dimensions of Brand Personality in *Journal of Marketing Research* 46: 105-119
- Hoffman, C. & Hurst, N. (1990) Gender Stereotypes: Perception or Rationalization? In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(2): 197-208
- Holbrook, M.B. (1987) Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall, What’s Unfair in the Reflections on Advertising? In *Journal of Marketing* 51(3): 95-103
- Holt, D.B. & Thompson, C.J. (2004) Man-of-Action Heroes: The Pursuit of Heroic Masculinity in Everyday Consumption in *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31: 425-440
- Jansen, B.J. & Solomon, L. (2010) Gender Demographic Targeting in Sponsored Search *Conference Paper*
- Jones, V. (2018) Men and Makeup: Makeup is Changing the Meaning of Masculinity: <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/14/health/makeup-skincare-male-masculinity-intl/index.html>
- Jones, G. (2010). Beauty Imagined: A History of the Global Beauty Industry. *Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press*
- Jung, K. (2006) Cross-Gender Brand Extensions: Effects of Gender of Brand, Gender of Consumer and Product Type on Evaluation of Cross-Gender Extensions in *Advances in Consumer Research* 33: 67-74

- Kacen, J.J (2000) Gender power and boyish nature: the past, present and paradisaic future of consumer gender identity in *Marketing Intelligence & Planning* 18(6/7): 345-355
- Katz-Wise, S. & Hyde, J.S. (2014) Sexual Fluidity and Related Attitudes and Beliefs Among Young Adults with a Same-Gender Orientation in *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 44(5)
- Kimmel, A.J. & Tossier-Desbordes (1999), Males, Masculinity and Consumption: An Exploratory Investigation in *European Advances in Consumer Research*, 4: 243-251
- King (2014) Is a Man's Skin Really Different from a Woman's?  
<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/men-women-skin-difference>
- Kite, M.E., Deaux, K., Haines, E.L. (2008) Gender Stereotypes. In *Psychology of women: A handbook of issues and theories*, 205-236
- Knoll, S., Eisend, M., & Steinhagen, J. (2011). Gender roles in advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(5), 867–888.
- Korichi, R., Pelle-De-Queral, D., Gazano, G. & Aubert, A. (2008) Why women use makeup: implication of psychological traits in makeup functions in *Journal of Cosmetic Science* 59: 127-137
- Kosunen, N., Asikainen A.R., Gustafsdottir, G., Haggrén, H. & Lång, K. (2017) Regulation of Gender-Discriminatory Advertising in the Nordic Countries. Nordic Council of Ministers
- Ladegaard, H.J. (1998) National Stereotypes and Language Attitudes: The Perception of British, American and Australian Language and Culture in Denmark in *Language & Communication* 18(4): 251-274
- Leigh (2018) Chanel Debuts Revolutionary Makeup Line For Men: 'Boy De Chanel'  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/tiffanyleigh/2018/08/27/chanel-debuts-boy-de-chanel-male-makeup-collection/#19745ee2e3c5>
- Levin (2017): 'Huge validation': Oregon becomes first state to allow official third gender option  
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jun/15/oregon-third-gender-option-identity-law>
- Lieven, T. (2018) Brand Gender: Increasing Brand Equity through Brand Personality *Book*
- Lieven, T., Grohmann, B., Herrmann, A., Landwehr, J.R. & van Tilburg, M. (2015) The Effect of Brand Design on Brand Gender Perceptions and Brand Preference in *European Journal of Marketing* 49(1/2): 146-169
- Lindqvist, A. (2012) How is Commercial Gender Categorization of Perfumes related to Consumers' preference of Fragrances in *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 65: 370-374
- Luckhurst, P. (2018) High Street Fashion Targets Gen Z Customers with Gender-Neutrality and Inclusive Sizing: <https://www.standard.co.uk/fashion/high-street-fashion-targets-gen-z-customers-with-gender-neutrality-and-inclusive-sizing-a3948461.html>
- Martin, M.C. & Gentry J.W., (1997). Stuck in the Model Trap: The Effects of Beautiful Models in Ads on Female Pre-Adolescents and Adolescents *Journal of advertising*, 26(2): 19-34
- Mehta, A. (2000) Advertising Attitudes and Advertising Effectiveness in *Journal of Advertising Research* 40(3) 67-72
- Meyers-Levy, J. (1989) Gender differences in information processing: A selectivity interpretation in *Psychology* 4(7)
- Mosher, D. & Sirkin, M. (1984): Measuring a macho personality constellation. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 18(2): 150-163

Muller, N. (2013) Third sex option on birth certificates: <https://www.dw.com/en/third-sex-option-on-birth-certificates/a-17193869>

Neale, L., Robbie, R., & Martin B. (2016). Gender Identity and Brand Incongruence: When in Doubt, Pursue Masculinity, *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 24(5): 347-359

Newman, A.A. (2010) Men's Cosmetics Becoming a Bull Market  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/02/fashion/02skin.html?mtrref=www.google.com>

Oakley, A. (1972) Sex, Gender and Society. (Book) London: Temple Smith

Olenski (2016) Can Your Content Sell a Lifestyle and not Just Products?:  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/steveolenski/2016/07/02/can-your-content-sell-a-lifestyle-and-not-just-products/#5c40316986ca>

Palan, K.M, Fischer, E. & Gentry, J.W. (2011) Gender Identity in Consumer Behavior Research: A Literature Review and Research Agenda in *Gender Issues in Consumer Research (special issue)*

Parsons, S. (2018) Men are more likely to buy cosmetics if marketed as genderless:  
[https://www.cosmeticsbusiness.com/news/article\\_page/Men\\_are\\_more\\_likely\\_to\\_buy\\_cosmetics\\_if\\_marketed\\_as\\_genderless/142441](https://www.cosmeticsbusiness.com/news/article_page/Men_are_more_likely_to_buy_cosmetics_if_marketed_as_genderless/142441)

Paton, C. (2015) Mr, Mrs, Miss... and Mx: Transgender people will be able to use new title on official documents: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3066043/A-new-title-transgender-people-join-Mr-Mrs-Miss-used-driving-licences-bank-details-government-departments.html>

Peñaloza, L. (1994) Crossing boundaries/ drawing lines: A look at the nature of gender boundaries and their impact on marketing research in *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 11: 359-379

Pike, H. (2016) Can Grooming Brands get 'Low Maintenance' Men to Buy Beauty?  
<https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/intelligence/can-grooming-brands-get-low-maintenance-men-to-buy-beauty>

Pollay, R.W. (1986) The distorted Mirror: Reflections on the unintended consequences of advertising in *Journal of Marketing*, 50: 18-36

Rahim, Z. (2017): Canadian baby given health card without sex designation  
<https://edition.cnn.com/2017/07/04/health/canadian-baby-gender-designation/index.html>

Reynolds, E. (2017): Gender neutral advertising: marketing for Generation Z  
<https://www.hallaminternet.com/gender-neutral-advertising-marketing-for-generation-z/>

Richards, C., Bouman, W.P., Leighton, S., Barker, M.J., Nieder, T.O. & T'Sjoen, G. (2016) Non-binary or genderqueer genders in *International Review of Psychiatry*, 28(1): 95-102

Rudman W.J., Hagiwara A.F. (1992) Sexual exploitation in advertising health and wellness products. *Women Health*, 18:77-89.

Schroeder, J. & Borgerson, J.L. (1998) Marketing images of gender: a visual analysis in *Consumption Markets and Culture* 2: 161-201

Schroeder, J. E., & Zwick, D. (2004). Mirrors of Masculinity: Representation and Identity in Advertising Images. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 7(1), 21–52.

Sczesny, S. & Stahlberg, D. (2002) The influence of Gender-Stereotyped Perfumes on Leadership Attribution in *European Journal of Social Psychology* 32(6): 815-828

- Sengupta, J. & Dahl, D. (2008) Gender-related reactions to gratuitous sex appeals in advertising in *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 18: 62-78
- Simon (2018) The Rise of Gender-neutral Beauty: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gender-neutral-beauty-rise-trend-unisex-brands-grooming-marketing-diversity-stereotypes-a8325026.html>:
- Souiden, N. & Diagne, M. (2009) Canadian and French men's consumption of cosmetics: a comparison of their attitudes and motivations in *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 26(2): 97-109
- Storms, M.D. (1979) Sex Role Identity and its Relationships to Sex Role Attributes and Sex Role Stereotypes in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37(10): 1779-1789
- Sweldens, S., Puntoni, S., Tavassoli, N. (2008): Gender Identity Salience and Perceived Vulnerability to Breast Cancer in *Journal of Marketing Research* 48(3): 413-424
- Tifferet, S. & Herstein, R. (2012) Gender Differences in Brand Commitment, Impulse Buying and Hedonic Consumption in *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 21(3): 176-182
- Till, B.D. & Priluck, R.L. (2001) Conditioning of Meaning in Advertising: Brand Gender Perception Effects in *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising* 23(2) 1-8
- Ulrich, I. & Tissier-Desbordes, E. (2018) A feminine brand? Never! Brands and Gender threats for "resistant" masculinities in *Qualitative Market Research: An international Journal*, 21(3): 274-295
- Um, N-H. (2014) Does gay-themed advertising haunt your brand? In *International Journal of Advertising*, 33(4): 811-832
- Uray, N. & Burnaz, S. (2003) An Analysis of the Portrayal of Gender Roles in Turkish Television Advertisements in *Sex Roles* 48(1-2): 77
- Van Hellemon, C. & Van den Bulk, H. (2012) Images of Advertisements that are Unfriendly to Women and Men in *International Journal of Advertising* 31(3): 623-656
- Veg-Sala, N. (2017) The impact of Stereotyped and Non-stereotyped brand genders on cross-gender extension evaluations in *Journal of Marketing Management*, 6: 60-74
- Viot, C. (2011) Can brand identity predict brand extensions' success of failure? In *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 20(3): 216-227
- Ward, T. (2017): Let's Hear It For The Boys: The Rise Of The Male Makeup Artist, online article: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tomward/2017/06/28/lets-hear-it-for-the-boys-the-rise-of-the-male-makeup-artist/#5a2306c13d16>
- West, C. & Zimmermann, D.H. (1987) Doing Gender in *Gender and Society* 1(2): 125-151
- Wilbur (2016): Is Men in Makeup Ads the Next Step for the Makeup Industry: <https://mic.com/articles/138781/are-we-getting-to-the-place-where-men-will-be-in-beauty-ads#.f1sGA1a5w>
- Wu, L., Klink, R.R. & Guo, J. (2013) Creating Gender Brand Personality with Brand Names: The Effects of Phonetic Symbolism in *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* 21(3): 319-330
- Ye, L. & Robertson A. (2012) Gender Identity: Does it Matter for Consumers' Perceptions? In *Journal of Business Diversity* 12(3): 81-92

Zawisza, M., Luyt, R., Zawadzka, A.M. & Buczny, J. (2016) Does it pay to break male gender stereotypes in advertising? A comparison of advertisement effectiveness between the United Kingdom, Poland and South Africa in *Journal of Gender Studies*

Zhou, S., Yin, Y., Yu, T. & Stuppel E.J.N (2018) Exploring the Experience of Novelty When Viewing Creative Adverts: An ERP Study in *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9: 471

Zotos, Y.C. & Tsihla, E. (2014) Female Stereotypes in Print Advertising: A Retrospective Analysis in *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 148: 446-454

### Images & other:

Adidas (image): <http://www.businessgranth.com/top-brands/top-male-deodorants-brands-india/>, <https://www.ebay.com/itm/Adidas-Women-Body-Perfumed-Deodorant-Spray-90-ml-Scented-choose-from-5-/152295958515>

Adidas (image): <https://www.snapdeal.com/product/adidas-gift-pack-of-4/853272002>

Aesop (image): pinterest

Anastasia Beverly Hills (image:) <https://www.ateliermanagement.com/news/photography-by-max-abadian-for-anastasia-beverly-hills>

Anastasia Beverly Hills (image): [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/07/12/anastasia-beverly-hills-men-makeup\\_n\\_10943796.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/07/12/anastasia-beverly-hills-men-makeup_n_10943796.html)

Axe (image): <https://psupopculture.wordpress.com/2011/04/21/axe-advertisement-analysis/>

Boy de Chanel (image): <https://models.com/work/chanel-beauty-boy-de-chanel-winter-2018>

Bvlgari (image): <https://fi.pinterest.com/pin/241294492507187407/?lp=true>

Bvlgari (image): <https://fi.pinterest.com/pin/460352393140618502/?lp=true>

CK one (image): <https://models.com/work/calvin-klein-ck-one-by-calvin-klein-2018>

Collin's Dictionary: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/gender-neutral>

Dove (image): <https://campaignbrief.co.nz/2015/06/24/dove-men-care-and-radiolive-ce/>

Fluide (image): <https://www.instagram.com/fluidebeauty/?hl=fi>

Garnier (image): <https://fi.pinterest.com/pin/328340629065905464/?lp=true>

Hèrmes (image): photo taken by me of an ad at a department store in Helsinki

Jimmy Choo (image): <http://www.lebook.com/creative/jimmy-choo-illicit-advertising-2015>

Jimmy Choo (image): <https://www.sephora.com/product/man-P393754>

Kiehl's & Marvel (image): <https://adage.com/article/media/kiehl-s-captain-america-comic-lands-wall-street-journal/241968/>

L'Oréal (image): <https://www.pinterest.fr/pin/589619776185203800/>

MAC (image): Jowet (2016): <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/uk/beauty-hair/makeup/news/a44412/mac-unisex-makeup/>

Nivea (image): <https://www.gosee.us/news/agencies/birgit-stoeve-iphoria-edited-liebeskind-nivea-grazia-portraits-of-artist-wes-lang-actor-alexander-gruenberg-and-actresses-friederike-kempter-lavinia-wilson-gala-and-personal-work-22552>

Nivea man (image): <https://fi.pinterest.com/pin/288300813630367505/?lp=true>

Old Spice (image): <https://contently.com/topic/old-spice/>



Razor blade (image): <https://www.horizonpeakconsulting.com/dollar-shave-club-marketing/>  
Statista (image): <https://www.statista.com/statistics/716384/beauty-personal-care-products-most-used-by-consumers-us-by-gender/>  
Statista (image): <https://www.statista.com/statistics/784894/male-attitudes-towards-personal-care-united-kingdom-uk/>  
Statista (Organic): <https://www.statista.com/statistics/717691/cosmetics-natural-organic-product-consumer-use-us-by-gender/>  
Tom Ford (image): <http://newsactivist.com/en/articles/gendered-world-views-fall-2016-section-17/product-sale-sex-or-cologne>  
The Ordinary (image): <https://theordinary.com/regimenguide>  
Millennials & Gen-Z birth years: [pewresearch.com](http://pewresearch.com)  
Mintel-study: <https://www.mintel.com/blog/beauty-market-news/the-global-trends-making-over-the-mens-grooming-market>